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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/905,593	07/13/2001	Lynn E. Vanatta	25185-P001US/SERIE 5739	3608
35034	7590	03/31/2004	EXAMINER SIEFKE, SAMUEL P	
JEFFREY L. WENDT, ESQ. 600 TOWN CENTER ONE 1450 LAKE ROBBINS DRIVE THE WOODLANDS, TX 77380			ART UNIT 1743	PAPER NUMBER

DATE MAILED: 03/31/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/905,593	VANATTA, LYNN E.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Samuel P Siefke	1743	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-32 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 10-22, 25-27 and 30-32 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9, 23, 24, 28, 29 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>1/11/02 & 3/25/02</u> | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____ |

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DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:

- I. Claims 1-9, 23-24, 28 and 29, drawn to a process for detecting trace anions, classified in class 436, subclass 180.
- II. Claims 10-22, 25-27, 30-32, drawn to a process for detecting trace anions, classified in class 436, subclass 173.

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

Inventions Group I and Group II are related as combination and subcombination. Inventions in this relationship are distinct if it can be shown that (1) the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed for patentability, and (2) that the subcombination has utility by itself or in other combinations (MPEP § 806.05(c)). In the instant case, the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed because if one chooses to analyze just one specific analyte in a sample only one concentrator can be used. The subcombination has separate utility such as separating multiple analytes in different streams by using multiple concentrators and separators.

Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art because of their recognized divergent subject matter, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

During a telephone conversation with Linda Russel on March 18, 2004 a provisional election was made with traverse to prosecute the invention of Group I,

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claims 1-9, 23-24, 28 and 29. Affirmation of this election must be made by applicant in replying to this Office action. Claims 10-22, 25-27, 30-32 are withdrawn from further consideration by the examiner, 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a non-elected invention.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

Claims **1-9, 23-24, 28 and 29** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over DIONEX, (Determination of Trace Anions in Concentrated Hydrofluoric Acid"; Technical Note 45, pp. 1-1 1, 1999) in view of Szecsody (USPN 6,706,527).

Dionex teaches a process for the determination of trace anions in concentrated hydrofluoric acid. The process comprises loading a liquid sample comprising the anion

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(chloride, nitrate, sulfate, and phosphate ions) of interest and an excess of another anion (hydrofluoric acid) onto a concentrator and sample loop by flowing the liquid sample there through in a first direction (loading the sample loop fig. 2; concentrator fig. 3); reversing the direction of the flow through the sample loop (fig. 2, by pump) or concentrator (fig. 5); and flowing the eluent stream into a ion chromatography. A six-port valve is used (fig. 2-5).

Dionex does not teach the analyzer can be a mass spectrometer.

Szecsody teaches an automated fluid analysis process where a mass spectrometer is used to analyze anions of interest in a sample. Szecsody teaches that it is known in the art that one may use HPLC detectors and mass spectrometers to analyze anions in a liquid sample (col. 8, lines 47-53). It would have been obvious to one having an ordinary skill in the art to modify Dionex to use a mass spectrometer to analyze the anions in a liquid sample because it is an equivalent standard in the art of fluid analysis of anions.

Conclusion

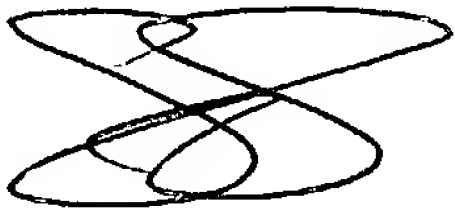
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Samuel P Siefke whose telephone number is 571-272-1262. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 7:00am-5:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jill A. Warden can be reached on 571-272-1700. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.


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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Sam P. Siefke



March 18, 2004



Jill Warden
Supervisory Patent Examiner
Technology Center 1700